175 the Bedouins of the Hijaz area. This Sanusi success aroused
795 the jealousy and animosities of the orthodox 'ulama ("clergy")
[798] of the Mecca area. Al-Samusi was forced to flee the Arabian
[793] peninsula, and in 1843 he founded his first zawiya ("lodge"),
[346] al-zawiya al-baida, in Cyrenaica. The Sanusi doctrine was as
acceptable to the Bedouins of Cyrenaica as it had been to the
[793] tribes of the Hijaz. The person and teachings of al-Sanusi
al-kabir ("the grand Sanusi"), as he came to be known, fit
into the "holy man" religious tradition of Cyrenaica and even
spread beyond into the Sudan and Lake Chad area. The Order
showed primary concern for the people of the desert: the
[993] Sanusi shaikh ("holy man") cared for the poor, and the zawiya
[346] became rest stops, storehouses, and religious centers where
[485] Bedouin children were taught their Quranic lessons. Through
[794] the zawiya, the Sanusiyya became a political and economic
175 integrating factor in the desert, and al-Sanusi became the
795 legitimate authority of the Bedouins. The zawiya became a
346 very important part of the traditional desert economic system.
182 Today one zawiya remains near al-Qasr but it is scarcely used.
[793] The Bedouins say: "Before, when Alexandria was far away by
camel, we could get what we wanted at the zawiya. Now that we
have trucks and trains no one goes to the zawiya."

175 The fortunes of the Bedouin became linked with those
795 of the Order. When the Sanusi became involved in full-scale
648 conflict with the Italian colonial power, the Bedouins bore

His main function is to manage the affairs of the village, apprehend crininals, report and register births and deaths, collect taxes and represent the government in all matters involving the relationship between the government and his village. Because of his position as the representative of the govrernment, he usually enjoys a considerable amount of power which, over the years, many omdas have used it to obtain personal benefits.

In 1958 the committee appointed for the examination of the possibility of applying the system to Awlad Ali noticed that villages in the sense of a compact settlement similar to that existing in the rural area simply do not exist in the Western Desert region. There are a few settled communities in the area but they are scattered homes or a few stores. These communities have no identifiable boundaries or administrative existence. The area as a whole is divided into ten administrative districts, each having a police station. These districts correspond to the old Senusia Zawyas which played an important role in maintaining order in the era until the First World War. Until that time the area was divided into fourteen zones each of which was under the jurisdiction of one of the zawyas. The zawyas were mainly religious centers, or shrines, inhabited and directed by a member of the Senusi order of Cyrenaica. The role of the head of the zawya was to teach the Qoraan and spread the teachings of the Senusi order. One of the ways the zawyas attracted followers was through distribution of food and clothing to those who joined it. The zawyas also provided places of refuge for those who needed protection since no one could force his way into the sacred zawyas. Because of their religious position which put

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

provocation, did the same in Cyrenaica, the Order had no choice but to resist.

But though it was attacks from the outside which destroyed the theocratic empire of the Sanusiya, it may be considered doubtful whether in any case such extensive territories could have been maintained under single direction. The economic and political organization of the Order was crude, even when elaborated in the days of Sayyid al-Mahdi in response to increased trading activities and to the need of maintaining peace in the petty and barbarous states that had come under its influence. Its administrative machinery was at no time adequate for effective control over such wide domains, with their poor communications and their manifold tribal, racial, and cultural divergencies. To these weaknesses must be added, after Sayyid al-Mahdi's death, personal rivalries within the Sanusi family on the lines of which cracks began to appear in the loose empire, and it is probable that even if it had not been attacked by the Powers of Europe it would have broken up into a number of principalities, or spheres of religious influence, ruled by various members of the family. It might indeed be possible to sustain the thesis that it was the Italian occupation of Libya which prevented the complete break-up of the Order by rallying the outraged sentiment of the Bedouin to its side as the symbol of their common resistance to conquest and alien rule.

The administrative organization of the Order in the time of Sayyid al-Mahdi was simple indeed. Each lodge of the Order lived on its own revenues, derived from endowments, tithes, contributions of money, goods, transport, and labour, and sent its surplus to Jaghbub and Kufra for the maintenance of the University and of the Sanusi family and for the general purposes of the Order. The Shaikh of each lodge arbitrated in disputes in the district in which it was situated and could generally wield spiritual sanctions sufficiently weighty to compel acceptance of his awards. The Shaikh of a lodge was appointed by the head of the Order and was responsible to him. There was, however, so little centralized planning that new lodges seem occasionally to have been founded by the initiative of influential families without the head of the Order hearing of the new foundation till its completion. In the more distant parts

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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absolutely obligatory and sinful to omit. I very much doubt whether many of the Bedouin know how to pray in the prescribed manner. As I have mentioned earlier, the Bedouin used to give alms to their zawiyas and in doing so they carried out one of the five major duties of a Muslim, but they regarded these alms as charity rather than legal dues. I have never met an ordinary Bedouin who had been to Mecca, or who even contemplated going there. Nevertheless, however lax they may be in other things, all Cyrenaican Bedouin keep the fast of Ramadan, and in this annual fast is summed up for them, more than in anything else, the obligations and privileges of Islam and its unity and strength. Moreover, although they are negligent Muslims themselves they respect piety in others. Brothers of the Sanusiya Order and religious men in general ought to pray regularly. That is their business and it is very necessary for the well-being of the community and worthy of liberal support, but the Bedouin is an unlettered man, a shepherd, and a warrior, and he has his own affairs to see to. Perhaps the Bedouin make up for their shortcomings by their enthusiasm for the *jihad*, holy war against unbelievers. They consider that they have fulfilled their obligation under this head in ample measure by their long and courageous fight, formally declared a holy war by the Caliph of Islam, against the Italians, the French, and the British. A Bedouin once said to me when I remarked how rarely I had seen Bedouin at prayer: '*nasum wa najhad*', '(but) we fast and we wage holy war'.

It must also be said that it would be an error to suppose that Islam had not, long before the time of the Grand Sanusi, strongly affected the character and custom of the Sulaimid Bedouin. This question, which is far from simple, need not be discussed in the present account and it is only necessary to note that the Bedouin assume that their customs are Muslim customs. It would also be a questionable judgement to assert that the Bedouin of Cyrenaica are not religious because they do not pay the same attention to outward ritual as do townspeople and peasants, for piety and holiness, as we have often been admonished, are not the same. The Bedouin certainly have a profound faith in God and trust in the destiny He has prepared for them and this faith and trust enhance that superb dignity

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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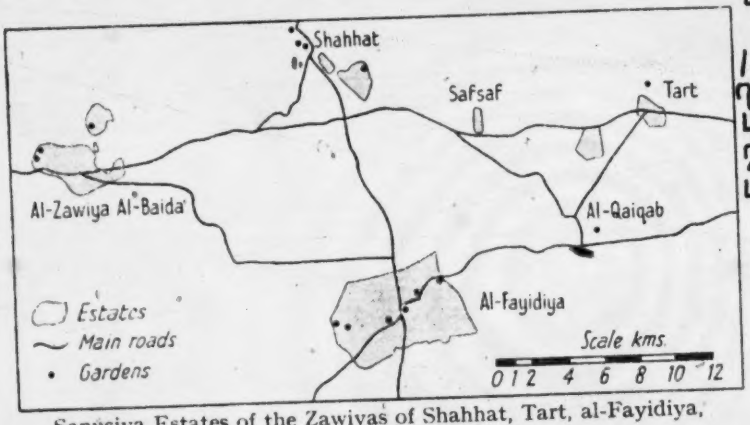
for they might then settle the matter by surrendering their claims to the zawiya.[1] Another way in which a lodge obtained rights in land was by asking permission of its owners to sow it. Constant repetition of this favour eventually gave the zawiya rights of use in it in perpetuity.

The tribesmen also assisted the Shaikh of the lodge in the cultivation of the lands, though most of the work was done by



Sanusiya Estates of the Zawiyas of Shahhat, Tart, al-Fayidiya, and al-Zawiya al-Baida.

the zawiya community itself. At sowing time the Shaikh would pitch his tent near the area to be cultivated and prepare a communal meal, taking with him some sacks of rice for the purpose. The local Bedouin then came with their draught animals and sowed and ploughed for a couple of days on behalf of the zawiya. The same procedure took place at harvest time. Besides gifts of land and voluntary service in cultivating, the Bedouin were expected to pay a tithe to the lodge at harvest time and after lambing. No doubt many of them paid annual dues but it is unlikely that any strict record was kept or that payment could have been enforced had they been averse to making it.

That it was expected that the Bedouin might promise services more readily than perform them is suggested by an interesting document, dated 1307 A.H., found by the Italians at the

[1] Savarese, op. cit., p. 193.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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Taukra zawiya and given in an Italian translation by Judge Colucci.[1] In it the tribal sections of the Baraghtha, Tursh, Dinal, and Shilmani place themselves under obligation, through the signatories to the deed, to pay the zawiya of Taukra alms on flocks and crops, to supply camels to carry supplies to Jaghbub, and to help the zawiya in sowing, building, excavations, and other works. Subject to the penalty of paying double alms they will not, without the permission of the Shaikh of the zawiya, render like services to other zawiyas. They promise also to defend the zawiya and to respect those who live in it, or who are its guests, and agree that those who fail to do so may be punished in body or in estate. Each will be for the zawiya and the zawiya for each. God is greater than any man. Those who are obedient will be recompensed by Him. Peace be to those who follow the right path.

The estates of the Sanusiya Order were *waqf* (called in Cyrenaica *habus*), inalienable endowments made in love of God by tribal sections and sometimes by individuals. They belonged to the various lodges to which they were donated, with the Order as a whole as residuary, and not to the family of the Grand Sanusi or to the Shaikhs of the lodges.[2] It was understood that when Bedouin donated tracts of country round a lodge they could continue to pasture and sow on any land not being used by the resident Brothers and to use the wells when there was sufficient water in them. The Shaikh of a zawiya was the legal administrator of its properties. The Head of the Order had no direct say in the administration of the estates, and in all probability only knew roughly of their extent. The revenues of one lodge could not be used for the upkeep of another, but any surplus over the expenses of a lodge were paid into a central pool. The members of the Sanusi family and the teachers and administrative officials of the Order lived in the distant oases of Jaghbub and Kufra, which produced little but dates, and had to be supplied from the lodges of the coastal region. Supplies were sent by caravan partly in local produce, such as skins, wool, grain, butter, honey, and meat, and partly in money or imported goods: rice, tea, sugar, and cloth. These gifts were

[1] Op. cit., pp. 434–5.

[2] Fernando Valenzi, 'La Senussia in Cirenaica ed il suo Patrimonio', *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, 1932, pp. 432–3.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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sadaqa, freewill gifts, though if a lodge did not send them its Shaikh was reminded of his obligations. The lodges dealt with certain trading houses at Banghazi, giving them import orders against future sales of local produce.

This practice worked well enough during the lifetime of the founder and his sons but, as so often happens in Islamic Orders, later descendants began to demand individual shares in the wealth of the Order. While Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif was its third Head it began to be the custom, a few years before the Italian invasion, to earmark the surplus revenues of particular lodges for particular members of the Sanusi family, and these members became regarded as patrons of the lodges which supplied them and responsible for their supervision. The territories in which the Order was dominant began to fall into spheres of influence controlled by individual members of the family, the allocation of spheres tending to be determined by the maternal kinship of various members with *Ikhwan* families occupying lodges in them. Sayyid Muhammad 'Abid and his brother Sayyid 'Ali al-Khattab had a lien on the *barqa al-baida* and Fazzan, where their maternal relatives the Ashhab family were influential Shaikhs of lodges; Sayyid Safi al-Din on the *barqa al-hamra*, where his maternal kinsmen the Mahajib family were predominant; Sayyid Muhammad Hilal on the Marmarica where his maternal kinsmen of the Sharifian Tursh lineage had considerable influence; and Sayyid Idris and his brother Sayyid al-Rida on the Cyrenaican plateau, where they had maternal ties with the important Bu Saif and Ghumari families. Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif had a lien on Tripolitania, where lived his maternal kinsmen the powerful Fawatir tribe of Zlitin territory.

The endowments of the Order in Cyrenaica ran into thousands of hectares.[1] Several lodges had each more than 1,000 hectares attached to them. The fourteen lodges whose lands were technically registered in 1919 by a mixed Italo-Sanusi commission possessed more than 50,000 hectares. The total lands of the Order may well have been more than 200,000 hectares, or somewhere in the neighbourhood of 500,000 acres. Much of the land was of use only for grazing, but much was valuable agricultural country on the plateau. Wherever there were

[1] An *Ettaro* is 10,000 sq. metres or 2·471 acres.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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states that the total annual revenue of the lodges of the Order, excluding those at Jaghbub and Kufra, was calculated at more than 200,000 Lire.[1]

The Italian figures appear to include all sources of revenue, agricultural produce, increase in stock, and the gifts received in beasts, cereals, honey, skins, mats, carpets, and butter. At the time there could have been no adequate assessment and an estimate of revenue in money is an inappropriate measure in what was for the most part a subsistence economy. The zawiya community lived partly by its own labour, largely that of servants and slaves, assisted, as explained, by the Bedouin of the vicinity at seed-time and harvest. The produce of its cultivations and gardens and of its flocks and herds was supplemented by contributions in kind from the Bedouin. In theory such contributions were an annual tithe, but in practice it is more likely that the Bedouin brought presents of beasts, butter, honey, &c., to the zawiya when they happened to visit it, or when its Shaikh let it be known that he was in need of something; and that now and again there was a general whip-round for a caravan to Jaghbub or Kufra. That is the Bedouin way of doing things.

Bedouin are hard-headed people and they expect a return for their labour and gifts. The neighbouring tribesmen considered that they were adequately rewarded for their support of their zawiya by the services it rendered, for, like the Christian monasteries of Europe in the Dark Ages, Sanusiya lodges served many purposes besides catering for religious needs. They were schools, caravanserai, commercial centres, social centres, forts, courts of law, banks, store houses, poor houses, sanctuary, and burial grounds, besides being channels through which ran a generous stream of God's blessing. They were centres of culture and security in a wild country and amid a fierce people, and they were stable points in a country where all else was constantly on the move. A Bedouin camp might be anywhere. A zawiya was fixed to the earth and its community with it. But the chief benefits the lodges conferred on the Bedouin were, as the Grand Sanusi told them in the letter quoted earlier, that they and their children might learn from scholarly and pious men the faith and precepts of Islam, that they might have the

[1] *Cirenaica Pacificata*, 1932, p. 125.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

opportunity to worship in a mosque, and that by charity to their lodges they might earn recompense hereafter.

Each lodge had its Shaikh, who represented the Head of the Order. He arbitrated between the Bedouin, led the tribesmen to holy war, acted as intermediary between the tribe or section and the Turkish administration, dispensed hospitality to travellers, supervised the collection of tithe, directed cultivation of grain and care of stock, dispatched surplus revenues to the Headquarters of the Order, acted as prayer-leader on Fridays, and assisted in preaching and teaching. There were besides a number of other functionaries among the Brothers: the Shaikh's deputy, the *imam* to lead the daily prayers and to teach the Koran and canon law, the *mu'allim* to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic in the zawiya school, and perhaps a special *muadhdhin* to call the faithful to prayer, though any of the Brothers could do that.

V

In principle, as we have noted, the lands attached to lodges belonged, like the lodges themselves, to the Order, and more particularly to the lodge to which they were donated, and not to any particular individual or family. In practice certain Shaikhly families tended to gain an hereditary interest in them. What happened in the early days of the Order was that a Shaikh was sent by its Head to found a lodge and when it was established he was translated to a fresh missionary field. Shaikhs of lodges were in this way moved fairly frequently at first, but it later became the practice to leave a Shaikh in charge till his death and then to nominate his successor from among his kinsmen, with the approval of the tribe and on the advice of Shaikhs of neighbouring lodges. What mostly seems to have happened was that the tribal sections concerned asked for a son or brother of the last Shaikh to be appointed director of their lodge and the Head of the Order confirmed their choice. As one Darsi tribesman put it: 'The Shaikh of our zawiya must be a man favoured by the hearts of the people.' In course of time the tendency for the Shaikhship of a lodge to be regarded as hereditary became very marked, it being understood that if there was a suitable candidate from the family already established in the lodge he would be appointed, a view with which the later Heads of the

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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tion were compelled to pay taxes and furnish supplies, and how forty-five of the Shaikhs of the Jawazi tribe were treacherously murdered and many of their followers massacred.[1] Generally, however, it may be said that Cyrenaica has no history, other than Bedouin traditions of inter-tribal wars, from 1051 to 1835, in which year the Turks regained control of Libya from the Caramanlis. On their return they instituted a more systematic administration than had been exercised during their earlier occupation.

The Turks returned to Cyrenaica about the time the Grand Sanusi first visited the country and eight years after their reoccupation he founded his first zawiya on the plateau. As the Sanusiya Order gained the confidence of the Bedouin and became accepted as their spokesmen, it was necessary for the Ottoman authorities to take it into consideration in their dealings with the tribes of the interior. The Order made it possible for the different tribes to express themselves politically as a unit for the first time in their relations with the outside world. The tribes provided the Order with a social system, and the Order gave to that system a political organization at a time when it was beginning to be brought into more direct contact with political forces outside tribal society.

The Sanusiya is known to have been given a Charter about 1856 by Sultan 'Abd al-Majid I. His firman was brought from Istanbul by Sidi 'Abd al-Rahim al-Maghbub, later Shaikh of the Sanusiya zawiya at Banghazi, who had been sent to Istanbul for the purpose and had the utmost difficulty, as was often the case with visitors to the Ottoman capital, in obtaining an audience with the Sultan. Whatever other privileges the firman conferred on the Order—I have not seen the document—it certainly exempted its properties from taxation and permitted it to collect a religious tithe from its followers. A second firman was issued later by Sultan 'Abd al-Majid's brother, Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz, and was brought from Istanbul to the Governor of Tripoli by Sidi Abu al-Qasim al-'Isawi, 'Abd al-Rahim's successor in the Banghazi lodge. There is in the Land Registry at Banghazi a letter from the Governor of Tripoli to the Governor of Banghazi giving the essence of this firman. It confirms the privileges granted by the earlier firman and adds to them that

[1] Op. cit., *passim* and p. 220 seq.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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The local Turkish officials were content for the most part to sit in the towns, many of them no doubt regretting that they had ever been sent to Cyrenaica, where their salaries were low and often in arrears, and to let the Sanusiya control the interior so long as taxes were paid and no overt act was committed against the Sultan's authority which might bring them to the notice of the Court; and the Central Government for its part was quite prepared to forget that Cyrenaica formed part of the Sultan's dominions so long as there was peace there and it sent annual tribute to Istanbul. The Turks were indifferent otherwise to what happened in Libya, which was a poor province, particularly the Cyrenaican part of it, where their administration was even less efficient than in Tripolitania, where it was happy-go-lucky enough. They had quite enough troubles elsewhere without alienating to no purpose a powerful Islamic Order and the warlike Bedouin who supported it. They therefore left the Sanusiya to perform many of the functions of government in the interior—education, justice, the maintenance of security, and even to some extent the collection of taxes, though in the matter of tribute there were difficulties, for Bedouin do not willingly pay taxes to anyone, and since they already paid a tithe to the Sanusiya, with a grace which contrasted with their reluctance to pay taxes to the Turkish Administration, they were disinclined to pay twice. When any question arose which required direct contact between the Head of the Order and the local Governor it was established through the Shaikh of the lodge at Banghazi, or a special messenger was sent from Jaghbub or Kufra to the Turkish Governor at Banghazi, or he sent a messenger to the Head of the Order in his oasis seat. From time to time the Central Government sent an envoy to the Head of the Order with gifts and instructions to report on what was going on in the Sahara, and on such occasions he was received handsomely and returned with the blessings of the *Shaikh al-Tariqa* on the Sultan. Sometimes, as we have seen, the Head of the Order sent a deputation to Istanbul.

The payment of taxes and the maintenance of peace and communications, the only two functions of government the Turkish officials bothered their heads about, were intimately connected. Minor quarrels among the Bedouin themselves little interested them, but armed resistance to taxation was certain to earn

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
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Bedouin followed them at great sacrifice. They were combined in many of the Sanusiya Brothers.

The Shaikhs and Brothers of the Order, with few exceptions, played a prominent part in the war, both in the field and by keeping the Bedouin, submitted and unsubmitted alike, in a ferment. The Italian soldiers and administrators constantly complained that whenever the Bedouin were tiring of the struggle the Brothers of the Order urged them to continue it. It was their example and exhortations which made it something more than the usual piecemeal resistance of a barbarous people to colonial conquest or more than a succession of raids of the kind Bedouin have enjoyed for so many centuries. Their participation made it both a national and a religious movement. It did much also to establish the Sanusiya in the hearts of the Bedouin. Some of the best-known names of the resistance, like Salih Lataiwish, 'Abd al-Hamid al-'Abbar, Saifat and Muhammad bu Farwa, Husain al-Juwaifi, Brahim al-Fallah, Fadil al-Mahashash, and Qtait bu Musa, were those of Bedouin Shaikhs, but most of the leading figures were Sanusiya *Ikhwan*, men like 'Umar al-Mukhtar, Yusif bu Rahil, Khalid al-Humri, Sharif al-Mailud, 'Abd al-Qadir Farkash, Fadil bu 'Umar, Salih al-'Awwami, and Muhammad bu Najwa al-Masmari.

The indomitable Sidi 'Umar al-Mukhtar was the soul of the resistance and the struggle is always associated with his name as similar struggles against French aggression in Algeria and Morocco are associated with the names of 'Abd al-Qadir and 'Abd al-Karim. Sidi 'Umar, 'our irreducible enemy, the faithful and able servant of Idris, the heart and soul of the Cyrenaican rebellion', as Graziani called him,[1] was that rare combination of Bedouin and Sanusiya Shaikh. He was born about 1862 of the *'Ailat* Farhan of the Braidan section of the Minifa tribe of the Marmarica and was educated first at the Sanusiya school at Janzur and afterwards at Jaghbub. He was nominated by Sayyid Ahmad al-Sharif Shaikh of al-Qasur lodge among the stubborn 'Abid tribe but only performed his duties there for two years before being summoned to Kufra to serve against the French in the Wadai. He returned to al-Qasur about 1906 and later took a prominent part in the first Italo-Sanusi war and in obstructing Italian penetration in the years of peace which

[1] Op. cit., p. 235.

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

*175 *648 Muslim hospice at al-Madina for the pilgrims. They ensured that the meat of their Muslim troops was prepared in the prescribed manner. In 1937 Balbo, at the request of some of the Muslim notables, forbade the sale of alcoholic drinks in the month of Ramadan. Exhibitions of fakirism by the ecstatic religious Orders were prohibited in 1935 to please the *'Ulama* who regarded them as an undesirable innovation. Mussolini thought, like Napoleon, that it was good policy to build up for himself a reputation of being the defender of Islam. The supreme moment of this burlesque was when the notables of Tripoli presented him on his visit to Libya with 'The Sword of Islam', an event commemorated by a huge equestrian statue in the middle of the town.

*175 *648 829 The Bedouin was not impressed with this Islamic propaganda, which even the more impressionable townsman thought highly ridiculous, especially the building of mosques by Christians. Those the Italians built outside the towns were neglected, for the Bedouin preferred to use his own prayer-places or the mosques of the Sanusiya lodges, where these had not been destroyed, when he felt the need to pray at all. Government qadis were of little interest to him, for in law and custom he followed tribal tradition, and such priestly services as he required were performed by his faqihs and zawiya Shaikhs. If the Italians liked to restore the tombs of his saints he was unconcerned. If they liked to encourage the pilgrimage, so much the better for those who felt the need, unfelt by himself, to make it. The Bedouin was a Sanusi and the Italians had driven the revered Heads of his Order into exile and had plundered and abolished the Order itself. He could hardly be expected to feel, and certainly did not feel, that the Italians were sincere in their professed respect for Islam.

*[795] *175 *648 The Italians based their claim to Arab regard on two considerations, their respect for Islam and their social services. I shall not describe in detail Italian measures designed to raise the standard of culture and living among the Bedouin, for their efforts in this direction were little advanced by 1940, but it is necessary to refer briefly to their educational policy. The Turks had provided instruction only in the towns, only during the last years of their rule, and only on a very modest scale. The only schools in the Bedouin districts were those of the Sanusiya lodges.

*[795] ● [794]

4: Peters E-6 (1948-1950) 1970 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

days on which kin of various sorts should attend the mourning ceremonies, which extend over a period of a week. Allowance is made for those who may be away temporarily, although they are expected to hasten to the mourning camp as quickly as possible. Agnatic kin are expected not only to be present on the appropriate day, but are required to offer gifts consistent with their relationship to the bereaved; agnates of the tertiary segment are expected to offer a sheep, while some cognates ought to bring a goat and others a quantity of sugar and tea. At one funeral in a camp where I was resident, soon after the death occurred, the main concern of its inhabitants was whether or not certain men of their section would attend the mourning rites and bring appropriate gifts with them. These men lived at the time in another camp a few miles away, as they had been doing for several years past. They did not come when they were expected, and when they finally arrived at the end of the week they brought with them gifts of sugar and tea only—gifts which were totally inappropriate for agnates of the group. They were, in fact, now no longer members of it, and my neighbours were able to tell me, 'They have branched off from us. We will never live together again.' The lineage had proliferated and this was the first occasion for showing it.

Wide-spread in Cyrenaica is a cult of saints. The number of saints' tombs varies from tribe to tribe, there being fewer among the camel herders of the semi-desert than among the cow-herding, almost sedentary, folk of the plateau area. Whatever the number, the members of the group that venerates a particular saint make an annual pilgrimage to his tomb, and sometimes more frequent pilgrimages are made. In one area there were two men, accepted by their respective kin groups as leaders, who vied against each other for the leadership of their section. One of them had been a famous warrior during the Italian wars and, after being injured, fled to Egypt where he lived for seventeen years, until he returned to his homeland in 1947. The other had also fought against the Italians, failed to win renown, was a captive for a time, later released, and subsequently appointed leader of his section by the Italian authorities. The first, during his period of exile, had become impoverished. The second during his years of freedom had prospered. As far as their personalities

4: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) .1970 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

were concerned, there was little doubt who was leader—the name of the former was known throughout the land. Now when the warrior returned from his Egyptian exile, his rival offered him a sheep as a gift. This act was wholly appropriate. Subsequently they continued to compete fiercely, but it soon became clear that the returned warrior was winning the greater support. In the face of this, the rival, in 1948, decided to break with tradition by staying away from the annual pilgrimage to the tomb of the local saint. Instead, he and his followers made their pilgrimage to a different tomb in the vicinity of their camp, and later built a low wall round the tomb, whitewashed it, and made it known that henceforward they would regularly use it for pilgrimages. The two kinship groups of a tertiary section now had their separate saint's tomb. Some months later, the rival decided to move with his small group to an area in which they had not previously resided. It is the custom among the Bedouin when they pitch their tents in a place for the first time, that the people of the neighbourhood should bring them gifts to mark the event. The returned warrior, who had now become a close neighbour of his rival was obliged, like others, to offer the latter a gift; he was also obliged to return the gift of a sheep that he had been given on rejoining his section in 1947. He brought a gift within a few hours of his rival's arrival, but it was a goat.[14] The rival and his followers were furious, and the argument that the warrior was too poor to give more was dismissed summarily. This was the final insult. The donor, in return, had been given less than he had presented. The reciprocity of gift exchanges had not only been arrested, it had been reversed. From then onwards the two groups made no attempt to conceal their hostility and went their separate ways.

Disputes stemming from circumstances such as these are the occasions which mark the proliferation of groups, although in all three cases cited, difficulties over water supplies had preceded the outbreaks of quarrelling.

In this discussion of the ways in which proliferation of segments takes place, the emphasis had been put on the tug of war between the interests of people in their agnatic connexions and

[14] A goat is inferior to a sheep in gift exchanges.